

To the question as to the means of abolishing power, the German, Max Stirner, and the American, Tucker, answer almost in the same way as the others. Both of them believe that if men understood that the personal interest of each individual is a perfectly sufficient and legitimate guide for men's actions and that power only impedes the full manifestation of this leading factor of human life, then power would perish of itself, both owing to disobedience to it, and, above all, as Tucker says, to non-participation in it. Their answer to the second question is that men freed from the superstition and necessity of power and merely following their personal interests would, of themselves, combine into forms of life most adequate and advantageous for each.

All these teachings are perfectly correct in this—that if power is to be abolished, this can be accomplished in no wise by force, as power having abolished power will remain power; but that this abolition of power can be accomplished only by the elucidation in the consciousness of men of the truth that power is useless and harmful, and that men should neither obey it nor participate in it. This truth is incontrovertible: power can be abolished only by the rational consciousness of men. But in what should this consciousness consist? The Anarchists believe that this consciousness can be founded upon considerations about common welfare, justice, progress, or the personal interests of men. But not to mention that all these factors are not in mutual agreement, the very definitions of what constitutes *general welfare*, *justice*, *progress*, or *personal interest* are understood by men in infinitely various ways. Therefore it is impossible to suppose that people who are not agreed amongst themselves and who differently understand the bases on which they oppose power, could abolish power so firmly fixed and so ably defended. Moreover, the supposition that considerations about general welfare, justice, or the law of progress can suffice to secure that men, freed from coercion, but having no motive for sacrificing their personal welfare to the general welfare, should combine in just conditions without violating their mutual liberty, is yet more unfounded. The Utilitarian, egotistical theory of Max Stirner and Tucker, who affirm that by each following his own personal interest just relations would be introduced between all, is not only arbitrary, but in complete contradiction to what in reality has taken place, and is taking place.

So that whilst correctly recognising spiritual weapons as the only means of abolishing power, the Anarchistic teaching, holding an irreligious, materialistic, life conception does not possess this spiritual weapon, and is confined to conjectures and fancies which give the advocates of coercion the possibility of denying its true foundations, owing to the inefficiency of the suggested means of realizing this teaching.

ANARCHISM—A Parable

I see mankind as a herd of cattle inside a fenced enclosure. Outside the fence are green pastures and plenty for the cattle to eat. While inside the fence there is not quite grass enough for the cattle. Consequently, the cattle are tramping underfoot what little grass there is and goring each other to death in their struggle for existence.

I saw the owner of the herd come to them, and when he saw their pitiable condition he was filled with compassion for them and thought of all he could do to improve their condition. So he called his friends together and asked them to assist him in cutting grass from outside the fence and throwing it over the fence to the cattle. And that they called Charity.

Then, because the calves were dying off and not growing up into serviceable cattle, he arranged that they should each have a

This spiritual weapon is simply the one long ago known to men, which has always destroyed power and always given those who used it complete and inalienable freedom. This weapon is but this, a devout understanding of life, according to which man regards his earthly existence as only a fragmentary manifestation of the complete life, and connecting his life with infinite life, and recognising his highest welfare in the fulfilment of the laws of this infinite life, regards the fulfilment of these laws as more binding upon himself than the fulfilment of any human laws whatsoever.

Only such a religious conception, uniting all men in the same understanding of life, incompatible with subordination to power and participation in it, can truly destroy power.

Only such a life-conception will give men the possibility—without joining in violence—of combining into rational and just forms of life.

Strange to say, only after men have been brought by life itself to the conviction that existing power is invincible, and in our time cannot be overthrown by force, have they come to understand that ridiculously self-evident truth that power and all the evil produced by it are but results of bad life in men, and that therefore for the abolition of power and the evil it produces, good life on the part of men is necessary.

Men are beginning to understand this. And now they have further to understand that there is only one means for a good life amongst men: the profession and realization of a religious teaching natural and comprehensible to the majority of mankind.

Only by means of professing and realizing such a religious teaching can men attain the ideal which has now arisen in their consciousness, and towards which they are striving.

All other attempts at the abolition of power and at organizing, without power, a good life amongst men is only a futile expenditure of effort, and does not bring near the aim towards which men are striving, but only removes them from it.³

LEO TOLSTOY.

¹Editor of the Free Age Press, Christchurch, Hants.

²In Russian prisons the executioners are generally furnished from the ranks of the convicts themselves, no one else, as a rule, being willing to fulfil that function.—*Trans.*

³See my article on Religion.—*Author* ('What is Religion?', the Free Age Press).—*Trans.*
Reprinted from 'Reynolds News', August 1903.

pint of milk every morning for breakfast. Because they were dying off in the cold nights, he put up beautiful, well-drained and well-ventilated cowsheds for the cattle. Because they were goring each other in the struggle for existence, he put corks on the horns of the cattle, so that the wounds they gave each other might not be so serious. Then he reserved a part of the enclosure for the old bulls and the old cows over 70 years of age.

In fact, he did everything he could think of to improve the condition of the cattle, and when I asked him why he did not do the one obvious thing, break down the fence, and let the cattle out, he answered, 'If I let the cattle out, I should no longer be able to milk them.'

LEO TOLSTOY.

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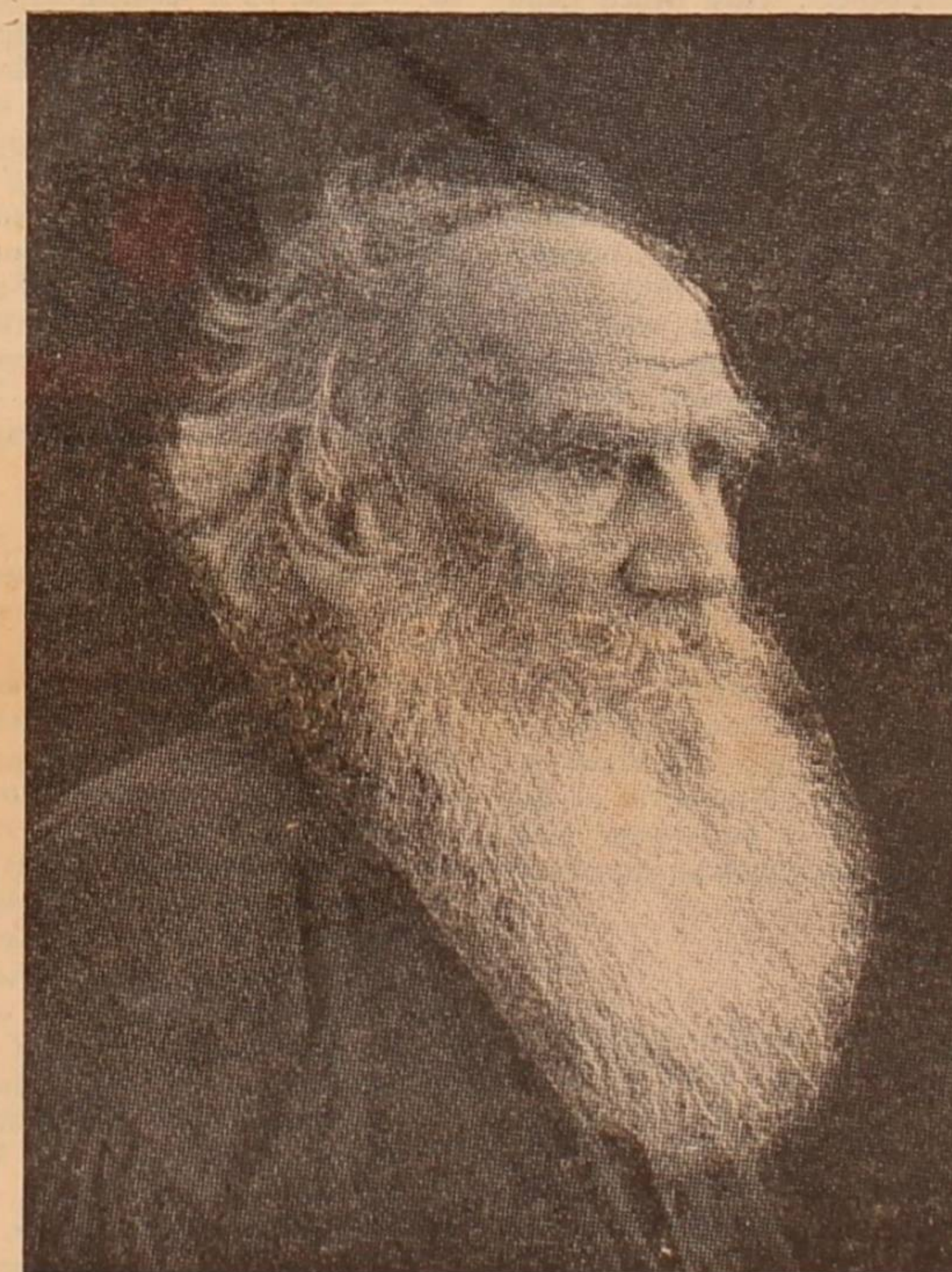
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NO. 6

LEO TOLSTOY



His Life and Work

THE ANARCHISTS are right in everything; in the negation of the existing order, and in the assertion that, without authority, there could not be worse violence than that of authority under existing conditions.

"But," it is usually asked, "what will there be instead of governments?" There will be nothing. Something that had long been useless and therefore superfluous and bad will be abolished. An organ that, being unnecessary had become harmful, will be abolished.

These are two quotations taken practically at random from the works of one of the world's greatest writers. He is usually labelled a Christian anarchist but he was apt not only to reject the title 'anarchist' but also to reject in a theological sense the appellation 'Christian'. Indeed he was excommunicated by the Russian Orthodox Church so he had no legal right to the title—that would not have worried him—indeed in one sense he could be said to have excommunicated the Russian Orthodox Church.

Eltzbacher in his book *Anarchism* classifies Tolstoy as an

idealistic, anomic, spontaneous, indomestic and renitent anarchist, if that gets anybody anywhere.

THE QUESTIONS

Tolstoy was a man who was always asking questions. When he was asking, analysing and probing he was interesting but when he thought he had found the answer to everything he was a bore. St. John Ervine, reviewing *The Kreutzer Sonata* in 1928 said, 'The Kreutzer Sonata was written in 1889 by which time Tolstoy the artist had nearly surrendered to Tolstoy the moralist, and was taking less delight in creative work than he was in propaganda. The surrender was never complete; the artist amazingly survived, and, in the most unexpected manner, rose up and insisted on being seen and heard. . . . Had Tolstoy not been the great artist he was, but merely the moralizer he aspired to be, all his works would now be as dead as himself.' His two greatest novels *War and Peace* (1869) and *Anna Karenina* (1876) were shot through with questionings,

heavily autobiographical and full of human dilemma. *Resurrection*, written in 1900, was a pot-boiler (written to raise funds for the Dukhobors); it magnified an old peccadillo of Tolstoy's into a vast slapping of the Russian soul on the table. But Tolstoy knew in *Resurrection* the answer to the human dilemma—it lay in expiation and salvation. Tolstoy fell into the literary trap of describing the 'evil of lust' so vividly and artistically that John Bellers (the English Quaker), among others, reproached Tolstoy for immorality. Tolstoy wrote Bellers an apologetic letter which concludes, 'I think we shall be judged by our consciences and by God, not for the results of our deeds, but for our intentions. And I hope that my intentions were not bad. Yours truly, Leo Tolstoy.'

Throughout Tolstoy's work the questions recur as titles to essays, to 'sermons', to letters, to pamphlets and to parables. 'Why then, do we go on living like this?'; 'Why do we continue to do what we think wrong?'; 'What then Must we Do?'; 'Why Do Men Stupify Themselves?'; 'Can Satan cast out Satan?'; 'What is Religion?'; 'How Shall we Escape?'; 'How Much Land Does a Man Need?'; 'What is Art?'. At one time Tolstoy codified the problems of life into six questions:

(a) Why am I living? (b) What is the cause for my existence and that of everyone else? (c) What purpose has my existence or any other? (d) What does the division which I feel within me into good and evil signify, and for what purpose is it there? (e) How must I live? (f) What is death—how can I save myself?

He also asked himself (in *The Slavery of our Times*): 'Is it right that people should not have the use of land when it is considered to belong to others who are not cultivating it? About taxes it is said that people ought to pay them because they are instituted with the general, even though silent, consent of all; and are used for public needs to the advantage of all. Is this true? Is it true that people should not use articles needful to satisfy their requirements if those articles are the property of other people?' Tolstoy's answer to these three questions is 'No' and Tolstoy concludes, 'As people formerly established laws enabling some people to buy and sell other people, and to own them, and to make them work—and slavery existed; so now people have established laws that men may not use land that is considered to belong to someone else, must pay the taxes demanded of them, and must not use articles considered to be the property of others—and we have the slavery of our times.' Can such a man with such a belief be anything other than an anarchist?

BEGINNINGS

Leo Nikolaievitch Tolstoy was born at Yasnaya Polyana of noble parentage in 1828. (This was seven years after the death of Napoleon and three years after the suppression of the 'Decembrists', the Russian revolutionary organization.) The fact that Tolstoy, like many Russian radicals (including Herzen, Bakunin, and Kropotkin), was a member of the land-owning aristocracy is often a cause for quiet sniggers among opponents of anarchism (as is also the case with Bakunin and Kropotkin). Kropotkin, I think it was, said the only occupations open to an aristocrat were either to be a soldier or a revolutionary. This was said partly in jest; but the dilemma of someone with genuinely radical opinions who has been born to, or inherited wealth or rank, is always present. If he hangs on to what he has he is rebuked for failure to fulfil his revolutionary ideals. If he gives it away he is rebuked for being an idealistic philanthropist seeking to prop up the social system. If he gives it all up—supposing this were possible—he is rebuked for exhibitionism and not supporting the movement with his financial help. In short he can't win, and Tolstoy, the radical Count, was a born loser.

In 1843 Tolstoy left the University of Kazan without taking his degree, but fired with the ideas of Rousseau and other French radical philosophers. He tried to ameliorate the lot of the serfs upon his estates by forming co-operatives which would counter the recurrent famines. Anticipating the liberation of the serfs in 1861, he freed the serfs upon his estates but was chagrined to find that they were not grateful for what he had done for them. Only in later life did he formulate this experience in the words, 'The rich will do anything for the poor except get off their backs.'

In 1852, in what seemed almost an attempt to relieve boredom, he joined the army as an artillery officer in the Caucasus. Whilst in the army he developed his talent for writing with descriptions of Army life in *The Cossacks* (1852), *The Invaders Prisoner in the Caucasus* (1862), *The Raid and Sebastapol Sketches*. Most of these sketches of military life were printed in Russian magazines and created for Tolstoy a great literary reputation.

From his military experiences he developed a hatred of war and violence, which were to some degree, a greater factor in his philosophy than the biblical literalism which he later gave as his basis for pacifism.

In 1857 he left the army and travelled in Europe. Always introspective, always self-critical; he always kept a diary in which his private thoughts were revealed (*à la* Jean-Jacques Rousseau). Like many young men of his age and class he gambled, got into debt, drank and visited prostitutes. In later years he, like many sinners at the penitent-form, 'exaggerated the sin to increase the salvation'. In *A Billiard-Marker's Notes* (1852) (one is irresistibly reminded of Oscar Wilde's quip 'proficiency at billiards is a sign of misspent youth') Tolstoy writes: 'God gave me everything that man can desire: wealth, a name, intelligence and noble aspirations. But I wanted to enjoy myself and trampled in the mud all that was good in me. . . . I am not dishonoured, not unfortunate, I have committed no crime; but I have done worse—I have killed my feelings, my reason, my youth.' In 1862 he, as it seemed, happily married Sofia Behrs and settled down to the life of a country gentleman and a writer. In the intervals he experimented in peasant education, managed his estates and even for a while became a magistrate! But marriage was only accepted by Tolstoy as a substitute for 'burning' and he considered his marriage as 'the most reckless act of his life'.

What went on beneath the surface he revealed in *Anna Karenina* (1876) where Levin is an autobiographical portrait of Tolstoy with his doubts and his self-questionings.

But before this he had taken five years (1864-1869) to write *War and Peace*, his masterpiece. Despite his pre-occupations and his steadily increasing family (Tolstoy, over the years, fathered fourteen children despite his abhorrence of sex).

WORK AND LIFE

He took up the idea of the 'labour-cure' from a book (in manuscript since it was banned by the censors) by Timothy Bondareff, a Siberian peasant, who belonged to a sect called 'Sabbath Men'. Bondareff's sect curiously enough, took their teachings from the Old Testament, Tolstoy appeared mainly to take his from the New Testament. Bondareff's ideas are summarized by the text 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it it wast thou taken'.

Tolstoy in his pamphlet on Bondareff's teaching says: 'The teaching of Bondareff brings us back to this first indubitable duty in the sphere of practical activity. He proves that the performance of this duty [i.e. labour] hinders nothing, presents no obstacles, and withal saves men from the calamities of want and vice. The performance of this duty, to begin with, puts an end to that dreadful division of mankind into two classes which hate each other, and by mutual advances will cover that hatred. "Bread-labour," says Bondareff, "will level all men, and will clip the wings of sensuality and luxury. It is impossible to plough or dig wells in fine clothes, and with clean hands, and whilst feeding upon delicate dishes. Their occupation in one sacred work common to all will bring men into union".'

This doctrine of work is echoed in Ruskin and Gandhi both of whom were influenced by Tolstoy; and in turn Ruskin influenced Tolstoy. It has in it the strain of phoniness which the doctrine of 'going to the people' and proletarian consciousness has always engendered in left-wing movements. Tolstoy, although he dressed as a peasant for most of his life was still an upper-class landowner. Ruskin once said, 'Here I am trying to reform the world, and I suppose I ought to begin with myself. I am trying to do St. Benedict's work, and I ought to be a saint. And yet I am living between a Turkey carpet and a Titian, and drinking as much tea as I can swig.' Tolstoy's realizations of the contradictions in his life were more frequent and more profuse but nevertheless he still lived in style. Even in his pathetic last renunciation which led to his death he was accompanied by a doctor-disciple.

RELIGIOUS WRITINGS

From 1879-1882, Tolstoy was engaged on his series of religious books starting with *A Confession*, followed by *Criticism of Dogmatic Theology*, *Union and Translation of the Four Gospels* and *What I Believe*. Sonya, Tolstoy's wife wrote to her sister in 1879, 'Leo is still working, as he calls it but alas! all he is producing are philosophical disquisitions! He reads and thinks until it gives him headache. And all in order to prove that the Church does not accord with the gospels. There are not ten people in Russia who can be interested in such a subject. But there's nothing to be done. My only hope is that he will soon get over it, and it will pass, like a disease.' Turgenev on his

deathbed wrote to Tolstoy, 'My friend, return to literature! That gift came to you from the same source as all the rest.' These religious works of Tolstoy were banned in Russia being hostile to the State Orthodox Church. Manuscript copies were circulated. When *What I Believe* was published in 1884 it was limited to thirty copies (which could be done without authorization from the censor) but even so, the police seized the copies. Two of the books were published in Russian abroad and smuggled into Russia. After *What I Believe* was seized Sonya said, 'I hope after this he will calm down and write nothing more in this vein.' However, Tolstoy was by then writing *What Then Must We Do?*

'WHAT THEN MUST WE DO?'

In *What Then Must We Do?* (according to Derrick Leon in *Tolstoy: His Life and Work*), 'Tolstoy has given a significant and moving account of his own reactions and experiences while trying to solve the problem [of poverty] followed by a devastating attack on the organization of a social order that makes such things possible, and concluding with his new religio-sociological ideas for improving the situation. In this work he writes, "Where the violent coercion of one man by another exists in a society, the significance of money as a medium for the exchange of the products of toil gives way to its significance as the most convenient means of exploiting the labour of others" and, later, "Every enslavement of one man by another is based entirely on the fact that one man can compel the others to obey his will. . . . If a man gives his whole work to others, gets insufficient nourishment, hands his little children over to hard labour, leaves the land and devotes his whole life to hateful labour on things he himself does not want—as occurs before our eyes in the world (which we call cultured only because we live in it) it is safe to say that he does it only because he is threatened with death if he does not".'

Leon's summary of Tolstoy goes on, 'Where violence is legalized, there slavery exists; and to the masses it makes but little difference whether the violence is imposed by an invading enemy, legal slave ownership, or a government department collecting taxes by civil machinery supported by the intervention of police or soldiery when their demands are refused.'

Tolstoy further says that property means 'the products of human labour pass more and more out of the hands of the labouring masses into the hands of the unlabouring'. . . . 'Money is a new form of slavery, distinguished from the old solely by its impersonality, by the lack of any human relation between the master and the slave.' . . . 'The essence of slavery consists in drawing the benefits of another's labour-force by compulsion, and it is quite immaterial whether the drawing of this benefit is founded upon property in the slave or upon property in money which is indispensable to the other man.'

Eltzbacher summarizes Tolstoy's teachings as 'One is to return good for evil, give to one's neighbour all that one has that is superfluous and take away from him nothing that one does not need, especially acquire no money, and get rid of the money one has, not buy or rent, and, without shrinking from any form of work, satisfy one's needs with one's own hands; and particularly does it mean that one is to refuse obedience to the un-Christian demands of State authority'. Much of this teaching is to be found in *What Then Must We Do?*

LIFE AND MARRIAGE

The difficulties of reconciling precept with practice always haunted Tolstoy—as it does many of us—and made for irreconcilable quarrels with his more practical, more worldly-wise wife. He too realized her viewpoint and additionally he found great difficulties in the sexual question. In the *Kreutzer Sonata* (1889) he made the almost Reichian statement which should be blazoned on the banners of Women's Liberation: 'The emancipation of woman lies not in colleges and not in parliaments, but in the bedroom'.

Tolstoy, like most would-be saints; despite those fourteen children, had yearnings after chastity. In his afterword to the *Kreutzer Sonata* he wrote, 'Chastity is not a rule or a precept, but an ideal, or rather one of the conditions of the ideal. And an ideal is only really an ideal when its attainment is possible only as an idea, when it appears attainable only in infinity, and when, therefore, the possibility of approaching it is infinite. If the ideal were attained, or even if we could picture it to ourselves as attained, it would cease to be an ideal.'

One of Tolstoy's further difficulties with his wife was as to the marketing of his literary works. At his most idealistic

Tolstoy believed that the whole world should share his ideas without charge. In fact, many of Tolstoy's works published in England by the Free Age Press bear the heartening note 'No Rights Reserved'. However his wife, who had not only the thankless task of managing Tolstoy's home and children but copied (in long-hand) all of Tolstoy's works from his much-corrected manuscripts, thought she had a right to insist that the marketing of his works should financially benefit herself, the children, and inevitably, Tolstoy. She drove a hard bargain and in many cases she published and distributed many of the books herself in order to maximise the profits.

THE DUKHOBORS AND THE FAMINE

Of course, many of Tolstoy's works were banned in Russia but Tolstoyans and erstwhile Tolstoyans (like Aylmer Maude) saw to their publication abroad. Many of these were published 'no rights reserved' by the Free Age Press. Sonya Tolstoy relented in the case of *Resurrection*, the royalties on which helped the Dukhobors (a persecuted anti-militarist religious sect) to emigrate to Canada where, as George Woodcock says, 'unfortunately, their persecution was soon resumed'.

Tolstoy's wife was always ready to help him with his practical projects and in 1891 and 1892 helped with soup-kitchens in the famine. At one point the Tolstoy family had opened thirty kitchens supplying free food to fifteen hundred people per day.

Not content with such charity Tolstoy pointed out in a newspaper article that the poor were starving because the rich were well-fed. This was censored in Russia but printed abroad. Distorted extracts were inserted in a reactionary Russian newspaper and the Minister of the Interior investigated the matter. Tolstoy's wife, who had connections in St. Petersburg, fought back through official channels. She persuaded Tolstoy to write a letter disclaiming the distorted article on the famine but it was refused publication in an official journal, however Sonya duplicated it and distributed it by hundreds in Russia and abroad.

According to Henri Troyat, in his life of Tolstoy, Tolstoy's aunt spoke to the Tsar and said, 'Sire, they are preparing to ask you to imprison the greatest genius in Russia in a monastery.' 'Tolstoy?' asked the Tsar. 'Yes, sire.' 'Would he be plotting an attempt on my life?' said the Tsar with a smile. Later the Tsar said to the Minister of the Interior, 'I will ask you not to touch Tolstoy. I have no desire to make a martyr of him and provoke a general uprising. If he is guilty, so much the worse for him.'

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

In 1893 Tolstoy completed *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, which is the clearest statement of Tolstoy's Christian 'anarchist' non-resistant position. Tolstoy thought that anarchism specifically involved a commitment to violence; therefore he rejected it. At the same time anarchists as materialists and anti-authoritarians have largely rejected religion. Tolstoy, in a sub-title to *The Kingdom* explained his religious idea as 'Christianity, not as a mystical doctrine but as a new life-conception'.

The definition of anarchism as 'materialist' is not an absolute, for anarchism itself could be defined as a religion; that is, a belief in that which cannot be scientifically proved; and, at the same time, there is in the anarchist doctrine something of a pantheism, of an unsubstantiated belief in the brotherhood of man. We can like Laplace, reject concepts of religion, or for that matter Tolstoy's religion, as 'an unnecessary hypothesis'. At his best Tolstoy is doing the right things for the wrong reason, at his worst his activities are harmless.

Discussing Tolstoy and leaving out 'God' is like *Hamlet* without the prince (except that Tolstoy in his wrongheadedness would have preferred *Hamlet* that way). Gorky, a friend of Tolstoy's became less friendly as Gorky became more Marxist and in 1900 Gorky wrote to Chekhov: 'Leo Tolstoy does not love men; no, he does not love them. The truth is that he judges them, cruelly and too severely. I do not like his idea of God. Is that a God? It is part of Count Leo Tolstoy and not God, this God without whom men cannot live. He says he is an anarchist. To some extent, yes. But although he destroys some regulations, he dictates others in their place, no less harsh and burdensome for men. That is not anarchism, it is the authoritarianism of a provincial governor.'

In 1893 *The Kingdom of God* was, naturally, prohibited by the censor, but duplicated copies were soon in circulation and the book was translated for publication abroad. In this book he castigates the church as hostile to the teachings of Christ. 'The churches as such, as associations that assert their infallibility, are anti-Christian institutions. The Christian churches and

Christianity have no fellowship except in name; nay, the two are utterly opposite and hostile elements. The churches are arrogance, violence, usurpation, rigidity, death. Christianity is humility, penitence, submissiveness, progress, life.' Tolstoy found the core of Christian teaching in the Sermon on the Mount and contended that by its alliance with the State, the church had become the chief obstacle to human happiness on earth (Troyat). Based upon this, Tolstoy formulated his doctrine of non-resistance.

NON-RESISTANCE

This doctrine did not originate with Tolstoy, he was influenced by Adin Ballou's book on *Christian Non-Resistance* (1846) and by William Lloyd Garrison, the champion of American anti-slavery, in his book entitled *Non-resistance*. (They in their turn had been influenced by the doctrines of the Quakers (Society of Friends).) It is important to realize that Tolstoy's doctrine differs widely from the doctrine of non-violent resistance. Indeed, in its rejection of resistance it may be thought to be a philosophy of despair of 'humility, penitence and submissiveness'. In 1897 on this subject, Tolstoy wrote in his diary: 'Non-resistance to evil is important because it is a means by which man develops in love. But it is even more important because, by absorbing it, neutralising it, stopping its movement, it is the sole remedy against evil, which like a rubber ball thrown against a wall, can only continue when confronted by resistance, and requires a medium that will absorb its elasticity. Active Christianity consists, not in creating something new. But in absorbing evil.' Whether Tolstoy would have approved of his disciple Gandhi's adaptation of his ideas into *satyagraha* and non-violent resistance with its numerous interpreters and practitioners is doubtful. One is quite certain however that Tolstoy would have recognized in the world today the failures of the policies of non-resistant violence. In 1887 Tolstoy said to George Kennan (who had just visited exiled revolutionaries in Siberia), 'The revolutionaries whom you have seen in Siberia undertook to resist evil by violence and what has been the result? Bitterness, misery, hatred and bloodshed. The evils against which they took up arms still exists, and to them has been added a mass of previously non-existent human suffering. It is not in this way that the Kingdom of God is to be realized on earth. The whole history of the world is the history of violence; and of course you can cite violence in support of human violence; but surely you must see that in human society there is an endless variety of opinions as to what constitutes wrong and oppression, and that if you once concede the right of any man to resort to violence to resist what he regards as wrong, he being the judge, you authorize every other man to enforce his opinions in the same way, and inevitably you have a universal reign of violence.' This would certainly have been Tolstoy's judgment on the Russian revolution and on events nearer our own day.

Whether indeed non-resistance or non-violent resistance are instruments of social change, whether they are tactically efficient or strategically commendable are debatable points but one thing is certain, the need to break out of the vicious circle of violence and hatred, and Tolstoy showed a way to do this.

MASTER AND MAN

Master and Man was Tolstoy's next creation, in 1895. This caused a great quarrel between Tolstoy and Sonya as to whom should handle the publication. Sonya hysterically ran out into the snow on two occasions—she wished to die of exposure like the character in *Master and Man*. Eventually she got her own way and *Master and Man* appeared in the magazine of her choice. To the deteriorating relationship was added further tragedy when their son, Ivan, died of scarlet fever.

Master and Man, the tale of the adventures of a rich man and a poor man caught in a blizzard and compelled by their impending death to discover their equality and dependence, was a great success. Tolstoy said sourly, 'Since I hear no criticism, only compliments about *Master and Man*, I am reminded of the anecdote of the preacher who, surprised by a storm of applause at the end of one of his sentences, stopped short and asked, "Have I said something wrong?" My story is no good. I should like to write an anonymous review of it.'

WHAT IS ART?

In the summer of 1895 Chertkov, one of Tolstoy's disciples wrote, 'Tolstoy has learned to ride a bicycle. Is this not inconsistent with Christian ideals?' Tolstoy did not think so. He had at various times given up meat-eating and hunting; had denounced smoking; disapproved of the cinematograph, approved

of chastity in quest of Christian perfection. After Sonya's rather pathetic *affaire* with a pianist, Tolstoy built up his hatred of 'works of art' into a Christian doctrine. His ever-latent Puritanism came forth and, fortified by an earlier discovery that his peasants didn't like Chopin, he built up a theory of art that one must not only be technically skilful, but have a worthy subject and a moral point of view. If Tolstoy contributed anything to the Bolshevik Revolution it was this foreshadowing of the theory of Social Realism.

Tolstoy admired Dickens but disapproved of Shakespeare, Baudelaire, Verlaine, Mallarmé, Maeterlinck. He approved of Sully Prudhomme (who had gained a Nobel prize when Tolstoy was nominated) and Leconte de Lisle. He disapproved of Monet, Manet, Renoir, Sisley, even Pissarro—that anarchist! He disapproved of Beethoven, Schumann, Berlioz, Liszt and Wagner and Tanayev—Sonya's pianist. The great controversy roused by *What is Art?* brought fierce controversy around the head of Tolstoy. This was to be the last of Tolstoy's religio-philosophical works. There is a great deal of nonsense in this religious yardstick applied to art and George Orwell in an essay *Lear, Tolstoy and the Fool* rightly takes Tolstoy to task for a further instalment of this nonsense in his essay on *Shakespeare*. In a curious way one finds in a quotation from *What is Art?* a paragraph which may have come from Eric Gill, another Christian crypto-anarchist, 'We are accustomed to understand art to be only what we hear and see in theatres, concerts, and exhibitions; together with buildings, statues, poems, novels.

But all this is but the smallest part of the art by which we communicate with each other in life. All human life is filled with works of art of every kind—from cradle-song, jest, mimicry, the ornamentation of houses, dress, and utensils, up to church services, buildings, monuments, and triumphal processions. It is all artistic activity.' It was a similar idea (summarized by Coomaswamy as 'An artist is not a special kind of man, but every man is a special kind of artist') that is embodied in Herbert Read's *To Hell with Culture*. Again we find Tolstoy saying the right thing for the wrong reason.

'RESURRECTION'

Having laid down these principles of art, Tolstoy proceeded to produce a novel *Resurrection* (1900)—begun in 1895—which was sold to help (by means of royalties) the Dukhobors to emigrate to Canada. Not only was this censored by the czarist authorities but it was banned in England by Mudie's and W. H. Smith's circulating libraries; however the book became such a success when a dramatic version was produced that Messrs. Mudie and W. H. Smith bowed to public opinion and purse. Nekhlyudov, the hero of the book is again a self-portrait of Tolstoy, a land-owner influenced by the ideas of Henry George. Troyat, in his Tolstoy biography, points out the flaw in Henry George's scheme which, like all schemes of monetary reform, 'in order to carry out such a redistribution it would first be necessary to change the government, or in other words, to make a radical and presumably bloody political reform'. Eventually Nekhlyudov fulfils Tolstoy's dream, gives up his money and attachments and sets out for Siberia with the girl he wronged. Tolstoy was rather ashamed of the success of this novel and he wrote, in slight contradiction of his *What is Art?* theories, 'I suppose that, just as nature has endowed certain men with a sexual instinct for the reproduction of the species, she has endowed others with an artistic instinct, which seems to be equally absurd and equally imperious. . . . I see no other explanation for the fact that an old man of seventy who is not utterly stupid should devote himself to an occupation as futile as writing novels.'

After *Resurrection* Tolstoy wrote several short occasional pieces and pamphlets including the two very important 'anarchist' contributions: *The Slavery of our Times*; *Patriotism and Government*; and *Thou Shalt Not Kill* (written on the assassination of King Humbert by the anarchist Bresci).

'THOU SHALT NOT KILL'

In *Thou Shalt Not Kill* Tolstoy wrote, 'When Kings are tried and executed like Charles I, Louis XVI and Maximilian of Mexico; or killed in a palace conspiracy like Peter III, Paul, and all kinds of Sultans, Shahs and Khans, the event is generally passed over in silence. But when one of them is killed without a trial, and not by a palace conspiracy; like Henry IV, Alexander II, Carnot, the Empress of Austria, the Shah of Persia, and, recently, King Humbert, then such murder causes great surprise and indignation among Kings and Emperors, and those

attached to them, as if they were the great enemies of murder, as if they never profited by murder, never took part in it, and never gave any orders to commit it. And yet the kindest of these murdered Kings, such as Alexander II or Humbert, were guilty of the murder of tens of thousands of persons killed on the battlefield, not to mention those executed at home; while hundreds of thousands, and even millions, of people have been killed, hanged, beaten to death, or shot, by the more cruel Kings and Emperors.' Tolstoy goes on to deny the right of people to be indignant about the killing of Kings, Emperors and Presidents, since, says Tolstoy, the statistics for Kings, etc., is about one in about a hundred thousand or perhaps a million ordinary people killed by the order, or with the consent of Kings and Emperors. Tolstoy however denies the usefulness of such an act since the state is hydra-headed, that is, a new one grows after one is cut off. He concludes that 'therefore we can help to prevent people killing Kings and each other, not by murder—murders only strengthen the hypnotic state—but by arousing men from the delusion in which they are held'.

'THE SLAVERY OF OUR TIMES'

The Slavery of our Times was reprinted by the Porcupine Press in 1948 as one of a series of anarchist and radical pamphlets with an introduction by George Woodcock. 'It,' according to George Woodcock, 'summarises his views from a social rather than a religious standpoint and sets out, by a consideration of the evils of existing society, to build a concise but formidable indictment of property, law, government and the slavery they produce. It criticizes orthodox Socialism, and puts forward an alternative ideal of radical change through the responsible action of individuals, based on the rejection alike of authority and violence.' One conclusion arrived at by Tolstoy is . . . 'all the practical and theoretical repeals of certain laws maintaining slavery in one form, have always, and do always replace it by new legislation creating slavery in another and a fresh form'. He defines legislation thus: 'Laws are rules, made by people who govern by means of organized violence, for non-compliance with which the non-complier is subjected to blows, to loss of liberty, or even to being murdered.'

EXCOMMUNICATING THE CHURCH

In February 1901 the Russian Holy Synod thundered forth, 'God has permitted a new false prophet to appear in our midst today, Count Leo Tolstoy. A world-famous author, Russian by birth, Orthodox by baptism and education. Count Tolstoy, led astray by pride, has boldly and insolently dared to oppose God, Christ and his holy heirs' . . . and so on, concluding, 'Therefore the Church no longer recognizes him among her children and cannot do so until he has repented and restored himself to communion with her.' By this time Tolstoy was 73, he had by now excluded the Russian Orthodox Church from consideration as a Christian institution and was, at his age, so far hardened in heresy he was unlikely to rejoin the Church. The Soviet State (which makes great play of the Tolstoy cult) was sooner enabled to repent and restore itself to communion with the Orthodox Church for propaganda and military purposes. The day Tolstoy's excommunication was published he was cheered by crowds in the street and deluged with telegrams and letters of congratulation. In a letter to the Synod Tolstoy said, among other things, 'I believe He is in me as I am in Him' (capitals as in the original).

'HADJI MURAD'

After a serious illness and convalescence in the Crimea where Chekhov and Gorky visited him, Tolstoy returned to his family home at Yasnaya Polyana in 1902. He wrote *Hadji Murad*; again he knew that this work would never pass the censor for its comments upon Nicholas I and Russia's treatment of Caucasian tribes, he put it away in 1904 and it was not published until 1912, two years after Tolstoy's death.

In 1903 he wrote in his diary: 'I am living in luxury and physical inactivity. And I therefore suffer continually from remorse. But I comfort myself with the thought that I am living on good terms with all my family and writing pages which I think are important.'

He not only wrote *Hadji Murad* but a play entitled *The Living Corpse*, articles, short stories and had extensive correspondence with prominent people. By this time Tolstoy had become what we should today call a publicist and his views were solicited and publicized upon almost all over the world—even in Russia. For

although the Tsar's censors unfailingly struck out all in Tolstoy which they thought seditious, even his censored works spoke out for what dare not be uttered aloud. Meanwhile his manuscripts circulated underground in Russia and—from their very origin—assumed more importance than his published works. It can be claimed that Tolstoy's works had more circulation in Tsarist Russia where they were banned than in Soviet Russia where lip-service is paid to Tolstoy as a forerunner of the revolution.

UNHAPPY FAMILIES

Ironically enough it was Tolstoy's insistence on writing religio-political works that for the most part had preserved quarrels from breaking out openly over royalties and money matters between he and his wife. Works which were banned by the Tsar's censor could not earn any money in Russia but eventually long, bitter and complicated quarrels over property, copyright and inheritance ensued, up to Tolstoy's death in flight from his wife in 1910. His 'disciples' who had gathered around him, like wasps round honey, added to the Dostoevskian-Chekhovian mad-house at Yasnaya Polyana.

To detail all these quarrels would only be to recount the effects of property, of marriage and of the possessive family and acquisitive society on the most sainthood-aspiring man and a worthy, family-solicitous and undoubtedly neurotic woman. To say that Tolstoy was a hypocrite in the compromises he became involved in, is to say nothing. Since it is *because* mankind is faced daily with these compromises that society and life must be reformed. We cannot live in society without compromise, this is what makes Tolstoy's efforts at sainthood so disturbing and his failure so grievous and apparent. But that we cannot live as we wish makes it ever more necessary to change our lives and the social system and people like Tolstoy have shown us ways and means of doing this. His glorious failure is more an inspiration than the squalid success of many others.

TOLSTOY'S ANARCHISM

We are left with the final question: Was Tolstoy an anarchist? According to some standards, for example those of anti-religion and even those of lack of personal authoritarianism, Tolstoy can be disqualified even though he complies with Eltzbacher's highly complex and *echt-Deutsch* classification. This grants, as Eltzbacher and others seem to assume, that there is an elaborate litmus-paper-like test for defining anarchists but to institute these tests we should be embroiled in heresy hunts and breast-baring comparable to the Soviet trials of the thirties, the Inquisition, and Tolstoy's private diaries.

Ignoring the *simplicite* doctrines, that every one is an anarchist who calls himself one, or every anarchist is his own kind of anarchism, both doctrines which have some merit, we can accept the idea of Sébastien Faure (quoted by George Woodcock in his prologue to *Anarchism*), 'Whoever denies authority and fights against it is an anarchist.' Tolstoy opposed Tsar, Church and State and fought against them. That he accepted the 'authority' of religious teachings in the Bible may be quoted against him, but in order to make those doctrines square with what he thought, he issued his own translation of the Gospels—which proved Leo Tolstoy to be right and all previous translations wrong.

That he fought non-violently or, as he thought 'non-resisted' (even the existence of Tolstoy was resistance), does not negate his fight; many think it made it all the more effective. It is true to say that the Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917 and the struggle for the freedom of India owe much to Tolstoy's teachings. It is too bad that the lessons of Tolstoy were only half-learned and the debt to Tolstoy was never paid.

JACK ROBINSON.

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Many titles in non-fiction still available in *World's Classics* editions and fiction titles available in *Everyman*.—J.R.

Address to the Working Class

TRANSLATED BY V. TCHERTKOFF¹ AND I. F. M.

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'The most fatal error that ever happened in the world was the separation of political and ethical science.'—SHELLEY.

IN MY 'Appeal to the Working People' I expressed the opinion that if the working men are to free themselves from oppression it is necessary that they should themselves cease to live as they now live, struggling with their neighbours for their personal welfare, and that, according to the Gospel rule, they should 'act to others as one desires that others should act towards oneself'.

The method I had suggested called forth, as I expected, one and the same condemnation from people of the most opposite views.

'It is an Utopia, unpractical. To wait for the liberation of men who are suffering from oppression and violence until they all become virtuous would mean—whilst recognising the existing evil—to doom oneself to inaction.'

Therefore I would like to say a few words as to why I believe this idea is not so unpractical as it appears, but, on the contrary, deserves that more attention be directed to it than to all the other methods proposed by scientific men for the improvement of the social order. I would like to say these words to those who sincerely—not in words, but in deed—desire to serve their neighbours. It is to such people that I now address myself.

I

The ideals of social life which direct the activity of men change, and together with them the order of human life also changes. There was a time when the ideal of social life was complete animal freedom, according to which one portion of mankind, as far as they were able, devoured the other, both in the direct and in the figurative sense. Then came a time when the social ideal became the power of one man, and men defied their rulers, and not only willingly, but enthusiastically submitted to them—Egypt, Rome: *'morituri te salutante'*. Next people recognised as their ideal an organization of life, in which power was recognised, not for its own sake, but for the good organization of men's lives. Attempts for the realization of such an ideal were at one time a universal monarchy, then a universal church, uniting various States and directing them, then came forth the ideal of representation, then of a Republic, with or without universal suffrage. At the present time it is regarded that this ideal can be realized, through an economical organization wherein all the instruments of Labour will cease to be private property, and will become the property of the whole nation.

However different be all these ideals, yet to introduce them into life, power was always postulated—that is, coercive power, which forces men to obey established laws. The same is postulated now also.

It is supposed that the realization of the greatest welfare for all is attained by certain people (according to the Chinese teaching, the most virtuous; according to the European teaching, the anointed, or elected by the people), who, being entrusted with power, will establish and support the organization, by which will be attained the greatest possible security of the citizens against mutual encroachments on each other's labour and of freedom and life. Not only those who recognise the existing State organization as a necessary condition of human life, but also Revolutionists and Socialists, though they regard the existing State organization as subject to alteration, nevertheless recognise power—that is, the right and possibility of some to compel

others to obey established laws as the necessary condition of social order.

Thus it has been from ancient times, and still continues to be. But those who were compelled by force to submit to certain regulations did not always regard these regulations as the best, and, therefore, often revolted against those in power, deposed them, and, in place of the old order, established a new one, which, according to their opinion, better ensured the welfare of the people. But as those possessed of power always became depraved by this possession, and therefore used their power not so much for the common welfare as for their own personal interests, therefore the new power has always been similar to the old one, and often still more unjust.

Thus it has been when those who revolted against existing authority overcame it. On the other hand, when victory remained on the side of the existing power, then the latter, triumphant in self-protection, always increased the means of its defence, and became yet more injurious to the liberty of its citizens.

Thus it has always been both in the past and the present, and there is special instructiveness in the way this has taken place in our European world during the whole of the nineteenth century. In the first half of this century, revolutions had been for the most part successful, but the new authorities which replaced the old ones, Napoleon I, Charles X, Napoleon III, did not increase the liberty of the citizens. In the second half, after the year 1848, all attempts at revolution were suppressed by the Governments, and owing to former revolutions and attempted new ones, the Governments entrenched themselves in greater and greater self-defence, and thanks to the technical inventions of the last century, which have furnished men with hitherto unknown powers over nature and over each other—they have increased their authority, and towards the end of last century have developed it to such a degree that it has become impossible for the peoples to struggle against it. The Governments have not only seized enormous riches collected from the people, have not only disciplined artfully levied troops, but have also grasped all the spiritual means of influencing the masses, the direction of the Press, and of religious development, and above all of education. These means have been so organized, and have become so powerful that since the year 1848 there has not been any successful attempt at revolution in Europe.

II

This phenomenon is quite new and is absolutely peculiar to our time. However powerful were Nero, Khengiz-Khan, or Charles the Great, they could not suppress risings on the borders of their domains and still less could they direct the spiritual activity of their subjects, their education, scientific and moral, and their religious tendencies. Whereas now all these means are in the hands of the Governments.

It is not only the Parisian 'macadam' which, having replaced the previous stone roadways, renders barricades impossible during revolutions in Paris, but the same kind of 'macadam' during the latter half of the nineteenth century appeared in all the branches of State Government. The secret police, the system of spies, bribery of the Press, railways, telegraphs, telephones, photography, prisons, fortifications, enormous riches, the education of the younger generations, and, above all, the army, are in the hands of the Government.

All is organized in such a way that the most incapable and unintelligent rulers (from the instinctive feeling of self-preservation) can prevent serious preparations for a rising, and can always, without any effort, suppress those weak attempts at open revolt which from time to time are yet undertaken by belated revolutionists who by these attempts only increase the powers of Governments.

The only means at present for overcoming Governments lies in this: that the army, composed of the people, having recognised the injustice, cruelty, and injury of the Government towards themselves should cease to support it. But in this respect also, the Governments knowing that their chief power is in the army have so organized its mobilization and its discipline that no propaganda amongst the people can snatch the army out of the hands of the Government. No man, whatever his political convictions, who is serving in the army, and has been subjected to that hypnotic breaking-in which is called discipline, can, whilst in the ranks, avoid obeying commands, just as an eye cannot avoid winking when a blow is aimed at it. Boys of the age of twenty who are enlisted and educated in the false ecclesiastic or materialistic and moreover 'patriotic' spirit, cannot refuse to serve, as children who are sent to school cannot refuse to obey. Having entered the service, these youths, whatever their convictions—thanks to artful discipline, elaborated during centuries—are inevitably transformed in one year into submissive tools in the hands of the authorities. If rare cases occur—one out of 10,000—of refusals of military service, this is accomplished only by so-called 'sectarians' who act thus out of religious convictions unrecognised by the Governments. Therefore, at present, in the European world—if only the Governments desire to retain their power, and they cannot but desire this, because the abolition of power would involve the downfall of the rulers—no serious rising can be organized, and if anything of the kind be organized it will always be suppressed and will have not other consequences but the destruction of many light-minded individuals and the increase of Governmental power. This may not be seen by Revolutionaries and Socialists who, following out-lived traditions, are carried away by strife, which for some has become a definite profession; but this cannot fail to be recognised by all those who freely consider historical events.

This phenomenon is quite new, and therefore the activity of those who desire to alter the existing order should conform with this new position of existing powers in the European world.

III

The struggle which has lasted during long ages between the State and the people at first produced the substitution of one power for another, of this one by yet a third, and so on. But in our European world from the middle of last century the power of the existing Governments, thanks to the technical improvements of our time, has been furnished with such means of defence that strife with it has become impossible. In proportion as this power has attained greater and greater degree it has demonstrated more and more its inconsistency: there became ever more evident that inner contradiction which consists in combination of the idea of a beneficent power and of violence, which constitutes the essence of all power. It became obvious that power, which, to be beneficent, should be in the hands of the very best men, was always in the hands of the worst, as the best men, owing to the very nature of power—consisting in the use of violence towards one's neighbour—could not desire power, and, therefore, never obtained or retained it.

This contradiction is so self-evident that it would seem everyone must have always seen it. Yet such are the pompous surroundings of power, the fear which it inspires and the inertia of tradition, that centuries and, indeed, thousands of years passed before men understood their error. Only in latter days have men begun to understand that—notwithstanding the solemnity with which power always drapes itself—its essence consists in threatening people with the loss of property, liberty, life, and in realizing these threats, and that, therefore, those who, like Kings, Emperors, Ministers, Judges, and others devote their life to this activity without any other object except the desire to retain their advantageous position—not only are not the best, but are always the worst men, and being such, cannot by their power contribute to the welfare of humanity, but, on the contrary, have always represented, and still represent, one of the principal causes of the social calamities of mankind. Therefore power, which formerly elicited in the people enthusiasm and devotion, at present—amongst the greater and best portion of mankind—calls forth not only indifference, but often contempt and hatred. This more enlightened section of mankind now understands that all that pompous show with which power surrounds itself is naught else than the red shirt and velvet

trousers of the executioner, which distinguish him from other convicts because he takes upon himself the most immoral and infamous work—that of executing people.²

Power, being conscious of this attitude towards itself continually growing amongst the people, in our days no longer leans upon the higher foundations of anointed right, popular election, or inborn virtue of the rulers, but rests solely upon coercion. Resting thus merely on coercion, therefore it still more loses the confidence of the people. And losing this confidence it is more and more compelled to have recourse to the seizure of all the activities of national life, and owing to this seizure it inspires greater and greater dissatisfaction.

IV

Power has become invincible, and rests no longer on the higher national foundations of anointed right, of election, or representation, but on violence alone. At the same time the people cease to believe in power and respect it, and submit to it only because they cannot do otherwise.

Precisely since the middle of the last century, from the very time when power had simultaneously become invincible and lost its prestige, there begins to appear amongst the people the teaching that liberty—not that fantastical liberty which is preached by the adherents of coercion when they affirm that a man who is compelled, under fear of punishment, to fulfil the orders of other men, is free, but that only true liberty, which consists in every man being able to live and act according to his own judgment—to pay or not to pay taxes, to enter or not to enter the military service, to be friendly or inimical to neighbouring nations—that such true liberty is incompatible with the power of certain men over others.

According to this teaching power is not, as was formerly thought, something divine and majestic, neither is it an indispensable condition of social life, but is merely the result of the coarse violence of some men over others. Be the power in the hands of Louis XVI, or of the Committee of National Defence, or the Directory, or the Consulate, or Napoleon, or Louis XVIII, or the Sultan, the President, the chief Mandarin, or the first Minister—wherever it be, there will exist the power of certain men over others, and there will not be freedom, but there will be the oppression of one portion of mankind by another. Therefore power must be abolished.

But how to abolish it, and how, when it is abolished, to arrange things so that without the existence of power men should not return to the savage state of coarse violence towards each other?

All Anarchists—as the preachers of this teaching are called—quite uniformly answer the first question by recognising that if that power is to be really abolished it must be abolished not by force but by men's consciousness of its uselessness and evil. To the second question, as to how Society should be organized without power, Anarchists answer variously.

The Englishman Godwin, who lived at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, and the Frenchman, Proudhon, who wrote in the middle of the last century, answers the first question by saying that for the abolition of power the consciousness of men is sufficient, that *the general welfare* (Godwin) and *justice* (Proudhon) are transgressed by power, and that if the conviction were disseminated amongst the people that general welfare and justice can be realized only in the absence of power, then power would of itself disappear.

As to the second question, by what means will the order of a new Society be ensured without power, both Godwin and Proudhon answer that people who are led by the consciousness of *general welfare* (according to Godwin) and of *justice* (according to Proudhon) will instinctively find the most universally rational and just forms of life.

Whereas other Anarchists, such as Bakounine and Kropotkin, although they also recognise the consciousness in the masses of the harmfulness of power and its incompatibility with human progress as a means for its abolition they nevertheless regard as possible, and even as necessary, a revolution, for which revolution they recommend men to prepare. The second question they answer by the assertion that as soon as State organization and property will be abolished men will naturally combine in rational, free, and advantageous conditions of life.